

PROGRAM OVERVIEW FOR STATE APPLICANTS

ROCS-Net is an EPA orientation and networking program for scientists and engineers. It provides an opportunity for EPA regional staff who have limited familiarity with EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) to visit an ORD research facility for discussions with ORD scientists about collaborative research opportunities, regional priorities and cross-cutting issues.

This year, ORD is launching a pilot project designed to strengthen ORD-Regional-State engagement on science-related activities. One component of the pilot is to include state scientists (one per region) in this year's ROCS-Net event.

2018 Program Goals

- Strengthen science across the agency by establishing new connections between ORD, regional and state scientists and engineers
- Promote a greater awareness within ORD of regional and state science issues
- Provide a path to future research collaborations

2018 Program Details

1. What is the date of the event?

The ROCS-Net event will be held on May 1-3, 2018, with travel days on April 30 and May 4.

2. Which research facility will the participants visit in 2018?

The event will be held at EPA's Andrew W. Breidenbach Environmental Research Center in Cincinnati, OH. Researchers from the following ORD National Laboratories and Centers work at this facility:

- National Homeland Security Research Center ([NHSRC](#))
- National Exposure Research Laboratory ([NERL](#))
- National Risk Management Research Laboratory ([NRMRL](#))
- National Center for Environmental Assessment ([NCEA](#))

3. Who should apply?

State scientists who would benefit from a greater understanding of ORD research capabilities and expertise should consider applying for the program. Selected state participants will work closely with their regional counterpart to develop and present a paper on the science issue selected by the region. Candidates must have supervisor approval to apply.

This year, Region I has selected PFOA/PFAS Human Health Risk Assessment as Region I's science issue.

4. How do I apply?

States can solicit internally in the appropriate environmental programs, forwarding one selected state candidate to Region I's Regional Science Liaison, Robert Hillger (Hillger.robert@epa.gov , 617-918-8660) by **March 16**.

5. *Who will review and select the applications?*

The Regional Administrator and Deputy Regional Administrator will determine the best fit for the ROCS-Net event. The selected state participant will be notified by Robert Hillger who will coordinate all aspects of the Region I participation.

6. *How will travel and per diem expenses be covered?*

ORD's Office of Science Policy will cover the travel expenses for each state participant.

7. *What is the focus of this year's visit?*

The 2018 program will emphasize research conducted at the Cincinnati facility under the following ORD research programs:

- ORD's **Safe and Sustainable Water Resources (SSWR) research program** uses an integrated, systems approach to address current and future water resource challenges by developing scientific and technological solutions to protect human health, and to protect and restore watersheds and aquatic ecosystems. SSWR is organized into four topical areas: (1) watershed sustainability; (2) nutrients and harmful algal blooms; (3) stormwater management, including green infrastructure; and (4) water systems, including drinking water and wastewater treatment and infrastructure and water reuse.
- ORD's **Homeland Security research program (HSRP)** develops data, tools, and technologies to minimize the impact of accidents, natural disasters, terrorist attacks and other incidents. HSRP supports EPA emergency responders in characterizing chemical, biological, or radiological (CBR) contamination, cleaning up impacted areas, managing wastes, and improving community resilience.
- ORD's **Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) research program** provides a comprehensive set of risk assessment products and analytical approaches that support a wide range of environmental management decisions.
- ORD's **Sustainable and Healthy Communities (SHC) research program** provides innovative and effective technologies, guidance, and tools for decision makers to help communities advance sustainability and achieve regulatory compliance. ORD research areas include: oil spills remediation, materials and waste management, tools for structured decision making and community planning, technical support for contaminated sites, and innovative technologies for site and soil remediation. ORD's Engineering Technical Support Center is located in Cincinnati, OH and provides technical support for soil, sediment, and mining related contamination.
- ORD's **Chemical Safety for Sustainability (CSS) research program** provides publically available information and cutting edge methods to help us make better-informed, more-timely decisions about chemicals we may be exposed to on a daily basis. ORD research areas include: life cycle analysis, nanomaterials, and sustainable chemistry.

8. *What is on the agenda for the visit?*

- Meetings with ORD management and staff
- Regional and state staff-led discussions about region and state specific science issues
- Lab tours
- Poster sessions and much more

9. *What will participants be required to do prior to the visit?*

- Participate in a pre-visit orientation webinar in April to learn about ORD's organization, national research programs and research capabilities.
- Work with your regional counterpart and Robert Hillger, Regional Science Liaison, to develop an issue paper. During the event in Cincinnati, regional and state participants will present the issue paper to event attendees during a panel session to generate discussions about possible opportunities for future collaboration.
- Participants will be assigned an ORD host who will help build relationships and make connections at the ROCS-Net event. Prior to the event, participants will set up a short call with their assigned host to introduce themselves and briefly discuss the issue paper. This call will also provide an opportunity for participants to learn about ORD publications or other materials related to the identified issue.
- ORD staff will assist participants with preparing travel arrangements.

10. *What happens after the visit?*

- Participants will be invited to offer suggestions about how to improve the program and to further strengthen the community of science.
- Six months after the event, OSP will organize a follow-up webinar to check in on progress and further encourage scientist-to-scientist networking.
- Participants are encouraged to continue interacting with the contacts you made at the event to discuss future collaborative research opportunities.

12. *Who do I contact for more information about the program?*

For further questions about the program, please contact Heather Drumm (drumm.heather@epa.gov, 202-564-8239) or the Regional Science Liaison Robert Hillger (Hillger.robert@epa.gov, 617-918-8660).